

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 13, 2009

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009—10 REGULAR SESSION

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 532**

---

**Introduced by Assembly Member Lieu**

February 25, 2009

---

An act to amend Section 1524 of the Penal Code, relating to search warrants.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 532, as amended, Lieu. Search warrants: firearms.

Existing law establishes various grounds for the issuance of a search warrant.

This bill would additionally authorize issuance of a search warrant when the property or things to be seized include a firearm or any other deadly weapon that is owned by, or in the possession of, or in the custody or control of, a person who has been detained or apprehended for examination of his or her mental condition, as specified. The bill would also authorize issuance of a search warrant when the property or things to be seized include a firearm or any other deadly weapon at the scene of, *or at the premises occupied or under the control of the person arrested in connection with*, a domestic violence incident involving a threat to human life or a physical assault, as specified.

The bill would also state the intent of the Legislature in enacting the measure.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 1524 of the Penal Code is amended to read:

1524. (a) A search warrant may be issued upon any of the following grounds:

(1) When the property was stolen or embezzled.

(2) When the property or things were used as the means of committing a felony.

(3) When the property or things are in the possession of any person with the intent to use them as a means of committing a public offense, or in the possession of another to whom he or she may have delivered them for the purpose of concealing them or preventing them from being discovered.

(4) When the property or things to be seized consist of any item or constitute any evidence that tends to show a felony has been committed, or tends to show that a particular person has committed a felony.

(5) When the property or things to be seized consist of evidence that tends to show that sexual exploitation of a child, in violation of Section 311.3, or possession of matter depicting sexual conduct of a person under the age of 18 years, in violation of Section 311.11, has occurred or is occurring.

(6) When there is a warrant to arrest a person.

(7) When a provider of electronic communication service or remote computing service has records or evidence, as specified in Section 1524.3, showing that property was stolen or embezzled constituting a misdemeanor, or that property or things are in the possession of any person with the intent to use them as a means of committing a misdemeanor public offense, or in the possession of another to whom he or she may have delivered them for the purpose of concealing them or preventing their discovery.

(8) When the property or things to be seized include an item or any evidence that tends to show a violation of Section 3700.5 of the Labor Code, or tends to show that a particular person has violated Section 3700.5 of the Labor Code.

(9) When the property or things to be seized include a firearm or any other deadly weapon at the scene of, *or at the premises occupied or under the control of the person arrested in connection with*, a domestic violence incident involving a threat to human life

1 or a physical assault as provided in subdivision (b) of Section  
2 12028.5.

3 (10) When the property or things to be seized include a firearm  
4 or any other deadly weapon that is owned by, or in the possession  
5 of, or in the custody or control of, a person described in subdivision  
6 (a) of Section 8102 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

7 (b) The property, things, person, or persons described in  
8 subdivision (a) may be taken on the warrant from any place, or  
9 from any person in whose possession the property or things may  
10 be.

11 (c) Notwithstanding subdivision (a) or (b), no search warrant  
12 shall issue for any documentary evidence in the possession or  
13 under the control of any person who is a lawyer as defined in  
14 Section 950 of the Evidence Code, a physician as defined in Section  
15 990 of the Evidence Code, a psychotherapist as defined in Section  
16 1010 of the Evidence Code, or a member of the clergy as defined  
17 in Section 1030 of the Evidence Code, and who is not reasonably  
18 suspected of engaging or having engaged in criminal activity  
19 related to the documentary evidence for which a warrant is  
20 requested unless the following procedure has been complied with:

21 (1) At the time of the issuance of the warrant, the court shall  
22 appoint a special master in accordance with subdivision (d) to  
23 accompany the person who will serve the warrant. Upon service  
24 of the warrant, the special master shall inform the party served of  
25 the specific items being sought and that the party shall have the  
26 opportunity to provide the items requested. If the party, in the  
27 judgment of the special master, fails to provide the items requested,  
28 the special master shall conduct a search for the items in the areas  
29 indicated in the search warrant.

30 (2) (A) If the party who has been served states that an item or  
31 items should not be disclosed, they shall be sealed by the special  
32 master and taken to court for a hearing.

33 (B) At the hearing, the party searched shall be entitled to raise  
34 any issues that may be raised pursuant to Section 1538.5 as well  
35 as a claim that the item or items are privileged, as provided by  
36 law. The hearing shall be held in the superior court. The court shall  
37 provide sufficient time for the parties to obtain counsel and make  
38 any motions or present any evidence. The hearing shall be held  
39 within three days of the service of the warrant unless the court

1 makes a finding that the expedited hearing is impracticable. In that  
2 case the matter shall be heard at the earliest possible time.

3 (C) If an item or items are taken to court for a hearing, any  
4 limitations of time prescribed in Chapter 2 (commencing with  
5 Section 799) of Title 3 of Part 2 shall be tolled from the time of  
6 the seizure until the final conclusion of the hearing, including any  
7 associated writ or appellate proceedings.

8 (3) The warrant shall, whenever practicable, be served during  
9 normal business hours. In addition, the warrant shall be served  
10 upon a party who appears to have possession or control of the  
11 items sought. If, after reasonable efforts, the party serving the  
12 warrant is unable to locate the person, the special master shall seal  
13 and return to the court, for determination by the court, any item  
14 that appears to be privileged as provided by law.

15 (d) (1) As used in this section, a “special master” is an attorney  
16 who is a member in good standing of the California State Bar and  
17 who has been selected from a list of qualified attorneys that is  
18 maintained by the State Bar particularly for the purposes of  
19 conducting the searches described in this section. These attorneys  
20 shall serve without compensation. A special master shall be  
21 considered a public employee, and the governmental entity that  
22 caused the search warrant to be issued shall be considered the  
23 employer of the special master and the applicable public entity,  
24 for purposes of Division 3.6 (commencing with Section 810) of  
25 Title 1 of the Government Code, relating to claims and actions  
26 against public entities and public employees. In selecting the  
27 special master, the court shall make every reasonable effort to  
28 ensure that the person selected has no relationship with any of the  
29 parties involved in the pending matter. Any information obtained  
30 by the special master shall be confidential and may not be divulged  
31 except in direct response to inquiry by the court.

32 (2) In any case in which the magistrate determines that, after  
33 reasonable efforts have been made to obtain a special master, a  
34 special master is not available and would not be available within  
35 a reasonable period of time, the magistrate may direct the party  
36 seeking the order to conduct the search in the manner described  
37 in this section in lieu of the special master.

38 (e) Any search conducted pursuant to this section by a special  
39 master may be conducted in a manner that permits the party serving  
40 the warrant or his or her designee to accompany the special master

1 as he or she conducts his or her search. However, that party or his  
2 or her designee may not participate in the search nor shall he or  
3 she examine any of the items being searched by the special master  
4 except upon agreement of the party upon whom the warrant has  
5 been served.

6 (f) As used in this section, “documentary evidence” includes,  
7 but is not limited to, writings, documents, blueprints, drawings,  
8 photographs, computer printouts, microfilms, X-rays, files,  
9 diagrams, ledgers, books, tapes, audio and video recordings, films,  
10 and papers of any type or description.

11 (g) No warrant shall issue for any item or items described in  
12 Section 1070 of the Evidence Code.

13 (h) Notwithstanding any other law, no claim of attorney work  
14 product as described in Chapter 4 (commencing with Section  
15 2018.010) of Title 4 of Part 4 of the Code of Civil Procedure shall  
16 be sustained where there is probable cause to believe that the  
17 lawyer is engaging or has engaged in criminal activity related to  
18 the documentary evidence for which a warrant is requested unless  
19 it is established at the hearing with respect to the documentary  
20 evidence seized under the warrant that the services of the lawyer  
21 were not sought or obtained to enable or aid anyone to commit or  
22 plan to commit a crime or a fraud.

23 (i) Nothing in this section is intended to limit an attorney’s  
24 ability to request an in camera hearing pursuant to the holding of  
25 the Supreme Court of California in *People v. Superior Court (Laff)*  
26 (2001) 25 Cal.4th 703.

27 (j) In addition to any other circumstance permitting a magistrate  
28 to issue a warrant for a person or property in another county, when  
29 the property or things to be seized consist of any item or constitute  
30 any evidence that tends to show a violation of Section 530.5, the  
31 magistrate may issue a warrant to search a person or property  
32 located in another county if the person whose identifying  
33 information was taken or used resides in the same county as the  
34 issuing court.

35 SEC. 2. It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this act  
36 to address the holding in *People v. Sweig* (2008) 167 Cal.App.4th  
37 1145 and the court’s suggestion that the Legislature “address the  
38 statutory flaw” highlighted in that case. It is not the intent of the  
39 Legislature to authorize the seizure of any firearms not owned by,  
40 or in the possession of, or under the custody or control of, any

- 1 person not subject to the provisions of Section 12028.5 of the Penal
- 2 Code or Section 8102 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

O